

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

OF ALACHUA COUNTY/GAINESVILLE

LWV



THE VOTER - March 2008 Official Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Alachua County/Gainesville

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear League Members,

Thank you, League members and friends! Thank you for your work, your financial donations, and your moral support! Because of you, LWVAC has hit the ground running in 2008.

We began the year with a successful Candidates Forum for the City Commission election, partnering with the University of Florida "Chomp the Vote" campaign. It was a pleasure to work with such enthusiastic young people! Thank you to Crystal Goodison and the Voter Service Committee for once again doing an outstanding job.

Our annual Legislative Interviews with our local delegation were conducted in February. Thank you to Chris Flagg and Colby Lowe; Jennifer Springfield and Erika Henderson; Crystal Goodison, Carolyn Testrake, and Bev Hill; and Kathleen McKee and Kathy Dilcher for taking the time to represent the League at these Legislative Interviews.

More events are coming – join us at the next Hot Topics meeting! These informal discussion meetings are perfectly designed for League members who are always ready to learn something new and to share their opinions. We hope to see you at the next event!

March 16-18 is the annual Legislative Seminar in Tallahassee, when League members from around the state will descend on our legislators to make sure our opinions and concerns are heard! If you are interested in attending this unique experience contact Rosalie or Kathleen McKee as soon as possible. In April, LWVAC will host its Spring Luncheon, featuring Cynthia Barnett as the keynote speaker.

Your local League is as active and exciting as it has ever been. Plan to attend one of the Hot Topics meetings or the Spring Luncheon, or go to Legislative Seminar or join a study committee. So much to do! And remember to always bring a friend (and potential member). And don't forget to answer our League Birthday appeal you received in February. Everything we do has some expense involved and we need your help there too.

Yours in League,

Rosalie Bandyopadhyay, President

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

Save the Dates

Thursday, March 20 – Hot Topics Luncheon: Energy Conservation Issues, 12:00 – 1:00 PM, Mildred's New Deal Café, 3445 W. University Ave., Gainesville.

Thursday, April 17 – LWV Spring Luncheon, Speaker: Cynthia Barnett on Water Issues, 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM, Sweetwater Branch Inn, 625 E. University Ave., Gainesville.

To receive emails from LWV about local events and League information, please send your email address to Crystal Goodison at cgoodison@gmail.com.

For up-to-date event information, please check our website: www.lwv-alachua.org

RAISE YOUR VOICE!

Making a statement in Tallahassee and Washington (Third in a series)

Whitney Untiedt, LWVAC 2nd Vice President

Action Alerts from LWVUS get Leaguers' attention and organize our response to issues of interest – but how can we make sure our voices get heard?

Legislative offices are flooded daily with emails, telephone calls, and form letters; if you want your message to rise about the din, the League can help!

LESSON THREE: Getting in, and getting heard

If you wish to meet with a member of the House or Senate personally, plan your visit carefully calling in advance.

Make an appointment. Call the legislator's office, and explain your purpose and who you represent. Pay attention to the calendar of the body (for example when is the body in session, when are committee meetings held), and schedule your appointment at a convenient time for the legislator.

Be prompt and patient. When it is time for your meeting, be on time and patient; members of the Legislature and Congress are often called away unexpectedly for a vote or meeting. If the member is not available for your appointment, consider meeting with a staff member instead.

Be prepared. Come to the meeting with all necessary information and organized materials. Have information and examples ready to demonstrate clearly the impact or benefits associated with a particular issue or piece of legislation.

Be responsive. Be prepared to answer questions or provide additional information in the event the legislator expresses interest or asks questions.

Be polite. Always follow up the meeting with a thank-you letter that outlines the different points covered during the meeting – and send along any other pertinent information and materials that were requested in the meeting.

Remember, the Florida State Legislature is in session for 60 days, beginning the first Tuesday in March. Committee weeks precede the legislative sessions. The best time to meet with your state legislator is when he or she is at the district office or during committee weeks in Tallahassee. Once the session begins, the legislators are often "on the floor of the chamber" and will be unavailable to meet with visitors during that time.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

The League of Women Voters of Alachua County/Gainesville
welcomes its new members!

Donna (Dee Dee) Hendeles
Reba Bandyopadhyay
Lucille Lane

SUBSCRIBE TO STATE ACTION ALERTS

The 2008 Florida Legislative session is here! 2008 regular session runs from March 4—May 2. With only 60 days in the session, the bills are likely to fly right by without our notice. Don't let this happen to you!

Join the Action Subscriber List and stay in the loop about the most significant upcoming bills and when to contact your legislator. Action Alerts make it easy to keep abreast of the latest legislative happenings and how to voice your opinion to your legislators.

Marilynn Wills maintains the subscriber list and sends out action alerts for both state and national level legislative advocacy.

If you'd like to be added to the Action Subscriber List, send your e-mail address to Marilynn Wills at: marilynnwills@msn.com.



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chris_flagg@yahoo.com or*

HOT TOPICS LUNCHEON: *ENERGY ISSUES- CONSERVING OUR FUTURE*

LWVAC will hold its second “Hot Topics” discussion meeting on Thursday, March 20, 2008, from 12:00 PM–1:00 PM at the New Deal Café, 3445 West University Ave.

We will be discussing energy conservation issues, the current focus and study of the League’s Natural Resource Committee. Is our community doing enough to promote energy conservation? Are we on track to meet future energy needs?

LWVAC’s “Hot Topics” gatherings feature good food, good company, and good conversation. Each month’s discussion will focus on an important issue affecting the citizens of Alachua County.

Special thanks to Dr. Mickie Edwardson for leading the first Hot Topics breakfast on February 21, with an invigorating discussion on how the media affects politics.

Contact Jennifer Springfield at mediatjen@espring.cfoxmail.com for more information.

SPRINGFIELD LAW, P.A. ATTORNEYS AND MEDIATORS

AREAS OF PRACTICE:
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PERSONAL INJURY
WORKER’S COMPENSATION
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ENVIRONMENTAL
LAND USE

605 NORTHEAST FIRST STREET
GAINESVILLE, FL 32601
(352) 371-9909

ALACHUA COUNTY ENERGY CONSERVATION STRATEGIES COMMISSION MAKES PROGRESS

Jerry Kiddler, Chair, LWV Natural Resources

The Energy Conservation Strategies Commission (ECSC) is now drafting its conservation proposals. They are using PointShare web-based software provided by the Alachua County Environmental Protection Department, a process that could be a model for future reports to the County Commission.

The first drafts of the proposals were due on February 29, and the final report will be completed by May 31, for presentation at the July County Commission meeting. ECSC has requested an extension of its May 2008 sunset date to allow time to respond to possible requests for clarifications or additional work by the County Commission.

Natural Resources Committee members have been attending the biweekly ECSC meetings in addition to the working meetings of two of the subcommittees. Reports and op-ed letters have appeared in the Gainesville Sun on some of the activities of the ECSC and energy-related issues being discussed. Our NR committee feels the ECSC is making good progress, and that the final report will be a useful guide for making future county energy policy decisions.

Minutes of the ECSC are available on the web at http://www.boards.alachua.fl.us/Agenda_BoardList.aspx?ID=48.

FLORIDA 2008 LEGISLATIVE SESSION IS HERE! STAY INFORMED! GET INVOLVED!

The 2008 Regular Session began Tuesday, March 4th and ends May 2nd.

Roughly 1250 bills have been filed for this Session already! If you want to stay informed on the Legislature’s work, please sign up for Action Alerts (page 2 of this newsletter) and check out “**Capitol Report**”, an approximately bi-weekly publication written by the League’s professional lobbyist, Jeanne Zokovitch.

Capitol Report gives an excellent summary of the active bills relating to LWVF priorities, as they progress through the legislature. Capitol Report can be downloaded for free from: <http://www.lwvfla.org/caprpts08.htm>

The LWVF set three 2008 Legislative priorities:

1. Government in Florida (which includes Equitable Taxation, Redistricting, and Citizen Initiatives)
2. Natural Resources & Sustainability (which includes Protection and Restoration of Water Supply, Coastal Management and Energy)
3. Civic Education.

Professional lobbyist and environmental lawyer, Jeanne Zokovitch, will again represent the League in the 2008 legislative session. Jeanne will also coordinate the Volunteer LWV of Tallahassee Lobbying Corps and Board and Off-Board Point Persons on Priority issues. We are still looking for folks to participate with this so please contact Dianne Wheatley Giliotti (wheatley@tampabay.rr.com) or Marilynn Wills (marilynnwills@msn.com) if you are interested.

JOIN THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Why Join? Educate, Advocate, Activate!

Promote voter education, study current issues with other League members, and make your voice heard at the local, state, and national levels.

Membership Dues: Individual: \$48 - Family: \$71 - Student: \$24

Membership with the LWV Alachua County also includes membership to the LWV of Florida and LWV of United States.

HOW TO JOIN: Mail this completed form, along with dues check to:

LWV Alachua County/ Gainesville
P.O. Box 15285
Gainesville, FL 32604-5285

Please make checks payable to: LWV Alachua County/ Gainesville.

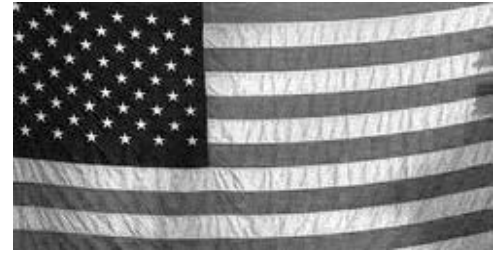
Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Phone: _____ **Email Address:** _____

Additional membership forms are available on our website: www.lwv-alachua.org



www.lwv-alachua.org

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*The League of Women Voters of Alachua County/ Gainesville
invite you to join us for our*

SPRING LUNCHEON

THURSDAY, APRIL 17

- Speaker:** **Cynthia Barnett**, Journalist and Associate Editor for Florida Trend Magazine, and Author of *Mirage, Florida and the Vanishing Water of the Eastern U.S.*
- Time:** 11:30 AM—1:00 PM
- Location:** Sweetwater Branch Inn, 625 E. University Ave,
Downtown Gainesville
- Cost:** \$20 per person
Hot Buffet Lunch, Vegetarian options provided.

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED BY FRIDAY, APRIL 11.

Please fill out the reservation form below and mail it, along with a check, to:
LWVAC c/o Billie Staff, 5526 NW 25 Terrace, Gainesville, FL 32653

Additional reservation forms are available on our website: www.lwv-alachua.org.
For questions, call 352-375-6960.

Luncheon Parking: Please park at the Kirby Smith Center, across Univ. Ave from Sweetwater Inn. The Kirby Smith Center is located on the north side of E. University Ave, just west of East 7th St.

RESERVATION FOR 2008 LWVAC SPRING LUNCHEON

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED BY FRIDAY, APRIL 11

Name(s): _____

Name(s): _____ Phone: _____

Please make _____ lunch reservation(s). Vegetarian options provided.

Enclosed is a check for \$ _____ (@ \$20 per lunch)